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ABSTRACT

Suggested methods for improving school organization, curriculum development, and educational planning are provided relative to the problems and constraints of rural one- and two-teacher schools. Particularly emphasized are procedures for scheduling and organizing classroom activities, developing curricula to meet the needs of rural students, and teacher-administrator planning. (DK)

A Day With Teacher and Children

in the

Modern One- or Two-Teacher School

We begin school, talk about experiences at home or on the way to school, tell news, plan for the day, ½ hour.

We help solve problems of living in school, home, community, our Nation, the world.
—school-wide or combined-group projects using school subjects and resources of community as needed by younger or older pupils, 1 hour.

We relax or play, ¼ hour.

We study or practice skills of reading, writing, spelling, arithmetic in connection with purposeful activities related to projects under way.
—separate grades or combined small groups as needed, 1¼ hours.

We eat, rest and clean up for the afternoon, 1 hour.

We work on individual problems, and younger pupils get help, ½ hour.

We create and engage in appreciative activities, including enjoyment of nature and the outdoors, 1 hour.

We enjoy recreation and physical education, ½ hour.

We close the day.
—talk over what we've accomplished and put the house in order, ½ hour.

Each morning pupils make a new day's plan with time allowance as needed

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
OFFICE OF EDUCATION

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Modern Ways in One- and Two-Teacher Schools

by
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Division of State and Local School Systems

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Contents

	Page
Foreword	IV
Looking at Our Jobs as Teachers	1
We Examine Our Teaching	1
We Think About Problems of Living Together	3
Organizing the School	4
Pupils Work in Flexible Groups	4
How Some Programs Are Organized	7
How One School's Organization Changed	8
Some Schools Use a Preplanned Arrangement	9
Teachers Help Individuals	10
Children Learn To Get Along Together	12
In Groups Children Learn To Work Cooperatively	13
Deciding What To Teach	16
Curricular Activities Are Selected To Meet Growth Needs of Boys and Girls in the Country	17
Everyday Experiences Are Sources of Suitable Curricular Activities	18
The Rural Community Is a Guide in Selecting Curricular Activities	23
Curriculum Guides and Courses of Study Suggest Information	27
Planning	28
Superintendent and Teacher Plan Before the Term Begins	28
The Teacher Plans Ahead of Her Pupils	29
Teachers and Pupils Plan Together	33
Daily Schedules Are Simplified	40
Looking for Results	44
We Review Our Aims	44
We Look for Evidence of Change	45

Foreword

THIS BULLETIN describes practices in one- and two-teacher schools that are helping rural boys and girls get a good education. It contains suggestions for improving the programs of schools that do not meet the needs of boys and girls in the country today. In the school year 1947–48, there were approximately 75,000 one-teacher schools and 18,000 two-teacher schools. More than 2½ million children look to these schools for the beginning of their organized education.

There was a time when the one- or two-teacher school had too many classes, too many subjects, and too little group work and socialization. Children's progress was hampered by screwed-down seats, poor lighting, wornout books, meager equipment. Janitor work was done by the teacher; weeds grew in the yard.

The good modern one-teacher school or two-teacher school has attractive rural surroundings. It uses and improves the resources of the country community. It is a place where older children learn to help the younger, where children, young people, and adults work together and learn from one another. Boys and girls remain long enough with one teacher for her to appraise and guide their progress intelligently. Understanding and cooperation exist among parents, pupils, teacher, and community.

Teachers on their first jobs and those serving during shortages of regular teachers should find this bulletin helpful in learning the ways of modern one- and two-teacher schools. The discussion emphasizes teaching procedures, selection of experiences, planning, evaluation, and cooperative activities. No attempt is made to show techniques of teaching arithmetic, reading, and other specific subjects since many books do this job well. Although the bulletin is addressed to teachers, we hope it will also be useful to administrators and supervisors who are looking for ways of helping teachers in one- and two-teacher schools improve their teaching.

GALEN JONES
Director, Instruction, Organization and Services Branch,
Division of State and Local School Systems.

Looking at Our Jobs as Teachers

NEW AND PROMISING practices are finding their way into the Nation's one- and two-teacher schools.[1] In the school year 1947–48 there were approximately 93,000 such schools serving some 2½ million children. Boys and girls in many of these small schools are solving their problems of modern rural living and improving their ability to work with one another. This bulletin tells how teachers help pupils to plan, select, organize, and appraise their experiences cooperatively. It introduces the reader to teachers' informal chats about their work, teacher-pupil planning sessions, pupils' committee meetings and study periods, and teachers' planned evaluation meetings. In a county workshop in Iowa, for example, Reba Cox and Hazel Peterson, teachers of neighboring one-room schools, met at lunch and walked to the conference rooms together.

We Examine Our Teaching

"Our workshop has led me to take a new look at my teaching," said Reba, who had been in the county only a year. "From now on I'm going to work harder to help my pupils to be useful citizens; to make their lives really count for themselves and others."

"That's my big goal, too," said Hazel.

"How do you accomplish it?"

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[1] Gaumnitz, Walter H., *and* Blose, David T. *The One-Teacher School—Its Midcentury Status.* Washington. United States Government Printing Office, 1950. (Federal Security Agency, Office of Education, Circular No. 318.) 30 p.

"I don't always; it's so big. I break it down and begin with small tasks. I look first for what each child is striving for and try to help him get it."

"How do you tell what children are striving for?" asked Reba.

"There are some things every child wants," replied Hazel. "One thing is to be well thought of by his group. He's striving to feel that he is one of them; that he really belongs."

"I have some two- and three-pupil classes," said Reba. "There *can't* be much group satisfaction there. I should combine small classes. But go on."

"Our consultant mentioned scientific studies," Hazel continued, "showing that children want to feel successful. Two people in the group emphasized children's need to love and be loved."

"My beginners take lots of attention," said Reba. "And children who stay home to work have special difficulties. I've been wanting to have some parents' meetings. I know that the parents and I could help the boys and girls by planning together. If only there were more hours in the day!"

"I think maybe we should use our time better," said Hazel. "My pupils and I have been trying to get longer working periods. Sometimes I help two or three classes to organize their work around one large problem or project. That gives me time to study and help individuals and attend to other things we have been talking about."

"One of our consultants said that some schools combine several subjects when these subjects are needed for the same project," said Reba. "I'm going to try that. I wish you and I could talk about our problems more often."

"I do, too. Why don't we simply set aside an evening each week for a get-together and then not let anything interfere with it?"

"That would be good," said Reba.

"I often see Evelyn Jones from Green Meadow School. Her pupils have activities that all grades take part in. Let's ask her to join us."

"All right. I'd like to ask Anne Gordon from Rose Hill. She wants to find what children are really interested in and help them do such things better."

The four teachers met regularly that year to talk about their problems. Often the group were able to think of solutions that would not have occurred to one alone. Not all of the teachers had the same problems. From time to time members of the group mentioned things that seemed so important to them in their own schools as to be kept in mind for cooperative study. Among them were:

1. Helping children learn how to:
   - Gain approval of the other children.
   - Develop the physical skills necessary for safety and social approval.
   - Work and play with other people.
   - Understand and take part in home and community activities.
   - Understand and get along with adults in the home and community.

2. Helping children discover and solve problems of real living such as:
   Planning fun and recreation.
   Selecting and buying toys, books, clothes, food, and in other ways learning to use our economic system.
   Learning to read, organize, and use information in books.
   Learning to keep up with the times through radio, television, and newspapers.
   Getting satisfaction through arts, handcrafts, and other creative activities.

3. Putting grades or classes together and combining subject matter in order to provide time for newer ways of learning.

We Think About Problems of Living Together

In order that you, the reader, may use this bulletin most effectively, we suggest that you, like Reba and Hazel, consider problems that seem important to you in your one- or two-teacher school. Make a list of them. If your list reads like the following, turn for ideas to the pages indicated in this bulletin.

1. Have I discovered what will give each child a sense of being loved, knowledge that he is doing things that the other children think important, a feeling that he is able to cope successfully with his problems? (See pages 17–18.)

2. Do the children and I organize each day's work in such a way as to have time for the things that count most for all of us? (See pages 7–9, 41–43.)

3. Are the boys and girls and I healthy, well-groomed, and suitably dressed? (See page 17.)

4. Is the schoolhouse spotlessly clean and sanitary and have we done all we can to make it attractive? (See pages 8–9, 33–35.)

5. Have we given ourselves all possible space and freedom for work in small groups? (See pages 5, 34.)

6. Am I studying and using the community outside of school as well as in school to help the children have richer and more worth-while lives? (See page 26.)

7. Do the pupils and I take some time at the end of the day to review our accomplishments, the things that have given us particular satisfaction, and the problems we want to take up next? (See pages 42, 43.)

Organizing the School

PROGRESS IN UNDERSTANDING children has brought new ideas about organizing the curriculum, of one- and two-teacher schools. Once the curriculum was based on the knowledge a child was expected to accumulate in school. This knowledge was thought to be contained mostly in textbooks, which were divided into pages and chapters and apportioned among grades 1 to 8 for the children to learn—a certain amount each year in reading, geography, and all the other subjects separately. Today the development of boys and girls, not the knowledge in books, is the first consideration in planning curriculums. Teachers now know more about ways in which children differ from one another. Boys and girls, for example, all have many different interests. No two children have exactly the same abilities and aptitudes. No two children learn at exactly the same rate or with the same rhythm. Every pupil has his own pattern of learning. Children's emotional characteristics and their relations with one another or their teacher affect their learning.

Both the curriculum and ways of learning have changed. Facts are no longer isolated from the activities of living, but are used to enrich them. Subject matter is more often interrelated, less often separated into different subjects. Knowledge to be learned for its own sake and single textbook assignments are on the way out. Passing out also, especially from one- and two-teacher schools, are the "recitations" in many single subjects. Instead, children are using their books and other materials to help them solve problems of living that they have out of school as well as in school. Changes of this kind naturally make a difference in the way one- and two-teacher schools are organized for learning.

Pupils Work in Flexible Groups

Considerations in organizing the school include the pupils, the problems and activities in which children wish to engage, and the need for long working periods and fewer classes.

Children's characteristics and needs

Some children work better together than others. It may be that they are friends. Perhaps they are interested in the same things generally. They may see more of one another outside of school and so feel comfortable in working together. At any rate, *children's preference* for one another is one consideration in organizing effective working groups.

Again three or four children may have a *special interest* in a certain aspect of a problem. A group of children who are all interested in the same activity can sometimes study better together than alone.

Children of different ages may be interested in the *same problems.* In a study of Argentina in grades 4 through 7 of a certain one-teacher school, a small group of children worked together to compare the gauchos of Argentina with the cowboys of the United States and to account for the likenesses and differences they discovered. Four of the group were fifth-grade boys. Two were fourth-grade girls, one a sixth-grade girl, and one a seventh-grade boy. First, the pupils made a list of questions to be looked up about Argentina. Children who read well were able to manage the harder questions. Three pupils had reading difficulties and were trying especially hard to improve. The teacher helped these children to find interesting easy books to read and report on to the class.

Together the boys and girls made a collection of books. Now and then a pupil reported on a book or chapter that he thought the rest of the children would want to read. Two reported on radio programs they had heard. Others brought appropriate pictures from Sunday supplements of newspapers to school. Some learned what Argentina produces and would be likely to exchange with the United States.

Aside from learning how to locate their own community on a map of the United States and getting a general idea of the continents, a number of the pupils had done little map work. The teacher helped them with further map study. They brought to school maps and travel folders showing trade and travel routes between different parts of the United States and Argentina.

Schools are organized to meet *pupils' needs.* As needs change, new working groups are formed. Grade lines are disregarded when pupils are served better by cutting across grades. Whether they keep the terminology of "grades" or use the designation of "ages" or find a new way of describing differences, teachers in one- and two-teacher schools try to arrange for pupils to go from group to group at any time.

"I don't keep my pupils in the same grades for all their activities," said a one-room school teacher interviewed for this bulletin. "Some of my so-called fourth-graders can do fifth-grade arithmetic. A few of my fifth-grade pupils can't do fifth-grade arithmetic as well; that is, they can do fifth-grade work, but they have to have easier problems than the advanced

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children in the grade. So, part of the fourth-grade pupils work with the fifth grade; some with the higher group, some with the lower.

"It's the same way with my first-graders," she continued. "The little girls this year seem to get along better than the little boys. So my faster first-grade children are grouped with my slow second-graders; temporarily, that is. The more advanced second-grade children sometimes work with the slow third grade. I'd like it if they could go along according to their individual needs regardless of grade for three years at least."

Activities and problems

Some problems require only a few kinds of activities. A large group can work on such problems. Suppose the Junior Audubon Club, to which pupils of all grades belong, calls a general meeting to decide whether or not to celebrate Bird Day. The large group can take action. It is not necessary to form small groups.

Other problems and enterprises may require a variety of activities and several groups or committees to carry them out. Perhaps different children need to learn certain skills before they can complete the tasks undertaken. Again, a handcraft, such as weaving, may require that the teacher give instruction to only a few pupils at a time. In such cases, arrangements are made for some pupils to carry on familiar activities independently while the teacher is helping a particular group to develop a technique or new skill. Problems or projects are often undertaken in which some children do art work, others make written reports, some do dramatizations, others develop bibliographies. In such cases, pupils arrange their chairs or desks so that groups can work on special projects and the teacher can go from group to group.

Longer working periods

New rural curriculums are made up of life activities, projects, and problems of living related to school, home, and community, such as "Problems of Farming in Our Community," "Planning Our Expenditures," "How People We Know Make a Living," and "How Safe Is Our Farm Water Supply?" The work involved requires long periods, which are provided in several ways. Different subjects may be combined for information and help in solving one problem. This combining of subject matter saves separate class periods. Combining grades saves more periods. The modern teacher makes good use of the longer periods thus made possible. Frequently she helps the pupils to evaluate their progress. She guards against omission of important learning.

Fewer classes

When all pupils of a one-teacher school are working on the same problem or project, general meetings are often held. Then all grades do many things

together. In this way, one group takes the place of six, seven, or eight grades, depending on how many grades are in the school. Information from several subjects is usually drawn into the problem. The subjects do not have to be taught separately. Time is saved by thus eliminating many of the classes that would be required for separate grades and separate subjects.

"We learn to write when we have something to write," explained one teacher, "and we learn to write better and more quickly than we would if we just practiced without any immediate use for what we write."

Using subject matter thus means more effective learning and more wholesome child development. It often means fewer classes than when information is broken into different subjects without regard for the ways children use it.

How Some Programs Are Organized

To get started on an organization that eliminates short classes, the teacher considers the progress the children may be able to make each year. Her curriculum guide may suggest goals or objectives and give brief overviews of subject matter. She may make a list of activities that she and the pupils think of together. These usually are everyday activities or problems in which the children are likely to engage at home or in school or community, such as improving the classroom, having a school newspaper, running a school store, or doing something to improve the community. She talks with the pupils about the list, and she and they together agree upon some things to be done first. They mention kinds of information needed. Provision is made for individuals to do what they like or need most. Usually one, two, or three major activities, one at a time, are all a teacher will tackle the first year.

If interest in one of the activities is high, it is started at once. Children and teacher plan together as described on pages 36 and 37, with pupils of different ages taking responsibilities of which they are capable. As problems and difficulties arise, they are jotted down for attention. When boys and girls do not know facts they need or are not able to perform skills required, time is set aside for these to be taught, provided the children have had sufficient related experiences to be ready for the new learning. For example, when a fourth grade in a Georgia school took charge of a cooperative school store, they found that some knowledge of division was required. Because the pupils had not learned how to do division, a certain part of the business was put off until, with the teacher's help, the children could learn the division process. In this school, grouping was informal, and necessary skills were taught without regard for grade levels.

In some schools, grades are grouped before the program is planned. When a large activity or problem such as conservation of natural resources is undertaken, each group chooses a certain aspect of the activity. An example

of this kind of organization is described by Leone Davison, the teacher, in *Conservation Education in Rural Schools.*[1]

For this project the teacher and the children held a planning meeting to discuss different ways of improving their community's use of its natural resources. They were already aware of the need to preserve and make wiser use of their soil and water and to study certain birds and other animals. They decided that each group would work on one or two natural resources during the year. In this school, the grades were combined in four groups, and the lowest was group A. Resources chosen by the different groups were: Group D, soil and water; Group C, birds of prey; Group B, birds and game animals of Minnesota; and Group A, birds we see around us. The children organized a conservation club and held regular meetings with each group reporting its activities to all the others.

How One School's Organization Changed

Helping children learn to work in flexible groups is a gradual process. No two schools organize their work in the same way. Here is Ellen Johnson's story of the way such grouping was begun and expanded in her school.

Using projects and interests that cut across grades

Miss Johnson, a teacher of a one-room school in central Texas, studied the school environment to find situations that the children might be interested in improving. She saw that the source of water for drinking and washing hands was a covered cistern, which was considered safe for that locality. Water was drawn through a pipe and a faucet. Two or three peanut-butter containers on a shelf served as drinking cups for the entire school. Certainly here improvement could be made. One day one of the girls brought to school a red-flowered tumbler that her mother had given her. It had come in a package of cereal.

"I have a tumbler almost like yours, except that mine is blue," said Miss Johnson. "I'm going to bring it and leave it on the shelf. Would you like to put yours there, too?"

Soon several of the children brought pretty tumblers. Miss Johnson remarked that the sixth-grade's health lesson was to be on the importance of sanitary practices in use of drinking water. She said that other grades might join if they were interested. That was the beginning. There were so many questions that Miss Johnson suggested continuing the study for a week with grades 4, 5, and 6 taking the lead. The younger boys and girls were interested, too, but instead of including them in active work on all problems, Miss Johnson arranged for the older pupils to report to the younger ones just on things in which they were interested.

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[1] *Conservation Education in Rural Schools.* Washington, D. C., National Education Association, 1943. 114 p. (Yearbook 1943, The Department of Rural Education, National Education Association.)

As a result of the study, all children brought individual tumblers. They enlarged the shelf for these, covered it with a piece of plastic cloth on which one of the girls stenciled a colorful design, and wrote each child's name on a piece of paper to be pasted on the place where his tumbler would be kept.

With attention drawn to health, Miss Johnson and the boys and girls arranged for better seating for the younger children. They made a low table for picture books, low shelves for toys, and chairs to fit the younger pupils. These improvements enabled the younger pupils to work in a corner away from the older pupils now and then, with rest and change from the unadjusted seats, and freedom to do things especially desirable for them.

Eliminating recitations

Miss Johnson helped the pupils to combine spelling, reading, writing, language, and art in learning how to write letters for information and materials, to write thank you notes, to spell everyday words correctly, to read to find answers to their questions, and to make posters and records. Thus several separate class periods were eliminated.

Miss Johnson introduced another way to eliminate unnecessary recitations. In the school was a boy, Tony, the son of Mexican parents, the only pupil in the third grade. Tony spoke English poorly because the language in his home was Spanish. He had third-grade reading ability. In the traditional school, several recitation periods might have been planned for Tony by himself. In this case such an arrangement would have broken up the day's program unnecessarily. It would not even have given Tony the opportunity he needed because the third-grade pupils were much younger than he. Tony enjoyed more the boys and girls of his age, who were in the fifth or sixth grade. The older pupils liked to have him with them. He played games well, was often umpire or referee. He could draw and paint better than most of them. He could "figure" accurately. He could handle tools with almost natural skill. He could play a guitar. Instead of keeping Tony by himself, Miss Johnson suggested that he join groups of older pupils in projects that cut across grades. In these projects she provided easy materials for Tony to read and gave him additional opportunities to use skills in which he needed improvement.

Some Schools Use a Preplanned Arrangement

By the foregoing means, teacher and pupils achieve a satisfactory school day with long periods for cooperative planning and working. In some schools, especially those with more than 15 pupils, teachers sometimes prefer a more or less preplanned grouping to the temporary and flexible methods described, especially in the initial stages of changing from a traditional subject-matter program to one that meets the needs of children. Mrs. Davison's school, pages 7–8, had this kind of plan. Such a plan is developed

gradually. The first year, grades 1, 2, and 3 are combined. Small temporary groupings within larger groups may be made, not by grades, but by different reading abilities. Arrangements are made for the first 3 grades to develop abilities in language, story-telling, handcrafts, and incidental arithmetic as one group with the teacher giving continuous attention to individual differences.

The next year another step may be taken. Grades 4 and 5 are combined. Pupils in these grades usually read well enough and have sufficient mastery of writing and computation to work with the teacher in helping individuals when they have difficulties. The teacher uses the course of study or curriculum guide to keep herself aware of the types of skills and information the children are likely to have use for at different ages.

Another step in the establishment of a prearranged plan for a one- or two-teacher school may be achieved by the combination of grades 6, 7, and 8. With these grades combined, problems and activities can be rotated, with sixth-grade activities used for all grades the first year, seventh-grade activities the second year, and eighth-grade activities the third year. The arrangement is not arbitrary, even though a preorganized plan is used. With the use of large-group projects or school-wide enterprises, subject matter may be used as needed, regardless of grade. To prevent a child's having to repeat experiences, the teacher records the problems or activities on which pupils work from year to year. Several such plans are discussed in recent books.[2]

Teachers Help Individuals

No type of organization can do away with the teacher's assistance to individuals. Instead, good organization gives the teacher more opportunity to help individuals. In each small group are boys and girls who have personal difficulties that they can overcome only with the teacher's help. Esther may have trouble getting facts for a report because she reads too slowly. Nan Roberts, the teacher, learns what Esther's specific reading difficulty is. Perhaps Esther cannot recognize and understand certain words. Perhaps she fails to see groups of words or to grasp complete thoughts. A little personal help from Miss Roberts removes the difficulty, and Esther is able to move ahead with her group.

If Bill finds it hard to spell when writing a letter to his cousin in Arizona, Miss Roberts sits down with him and together they work out a way to help

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[2] Bowen, Genevieve. *Living and Learning in a Rural School.* New York, The Macmillan Co., 1946. *See especially* chapters II, X, and XII.

Weber, Julia. *My Country School Diary: An Adventure in Creative Teaching.* New York, Harper & Bros., 1946. 270 p.

Wofford, Kate V. *Teaching in Small Schools.* New York, The Macmillan Co., 1949. *See especially* chapters III and VI.

Teaching in One and Two-Room Schools. Washington, D. C., Federal Security Agency, Office of Education. (Selected References, No. 25.) 10 p. No charge. *See especially* items listed in section II.

Bill remember the spelling of everyday words. Miss Roberts shows him how to practice the method correctly until he can use it effectively in learning to spell other new or hard words. She also teaches him how to use the dictionary to look up the spelling of the unusual words. If two or three children from different interest groups need the same kind of assistance in spelling, Miss Roberts works with all at once. Having the entire school properly organized for the main project frees her to give this aid. If Fred is unhappy working with a particular group, Miss Roberts tries to help him analyze his difficulty and improve his ways of getting along with people. She may suggest that he work with a different group for a time.

Younger pupils working on an enterprise with older ones sometimes need extra help. When interviewed on this subject, the teacher referred to on page 5 said:

"When several pupils are working on the same problem, I try to help them all according to their abilities. I don't expect the younger ones to do a lot of the things that I expect the older children to do."

She added, "I do help the older ones plan in such a way that they can go ahead by themselves. That leaves me some time practically every day to give the younger children the guidance they need. I also make opportunities for the younger boys and girls to learn certain things from the older ones."

Teachers with several groups that need different kinds of assistance try to have in their professional libraries some practical books on teaching fundamental skills, such as reading or arithmetic. The books help a teacher diagnose a child's technical difficulties quickly and suggest ways of overcoming them. Examples are *Teaching Children To Read*,[3] *How To Make Arithmetic Meaningful*,[4] and *Adapting Instruction in Arithmetic to Individual Differences*.[5]

Miss Edmunds, a teacher of the upper grades in a two-teacher school in Virginia, has developed a plan that enables her to give individual help to children in handcrafts. In her school, two separate quarter days each week are devoted to handcrafts. As a result, the children have developed creative skill and gained a great deal of satisfaction in making things for school and home out of inexpensive materials, such as printed or bleached feed sacks, scraps of cloth, discarded boxes, wood, and cardboard.

During planning period, every child who has a project under way reports his progress and tells about his difficulties and how he overcame them and shows what he has made. Each day some children are ready for new proj-

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[3] Adams, Fay; Gray, Lillian; *and* Reese, Dora. *Teaching Children To Read.* New York, Ronald Press Co., 1949. 525 p.

[4] Brueckner, L. J., *and* Grossnickle, Foster E. *How To Make Arithmetic Meaningful.* Philadelphia, The John C. Winston Co., 1947. 513 p.

[5] Brueckner, L. J. *Adapting Instruction in Arithmetic to Individual Differences.* Minneapolis, Minn., University of Minnesota Press, 1941. 55 p.

ects and have decided what to do next. They explain their new projects and show the materials they are going to use. They need little help from the teacher. One or two of the children who have completed projects may not have decided what to do next. The reports and exchange of ideas often aid them. Miss Edmunds may need to help them later in making their decisions and in selecting material.

After the planning period, the boys and girls who have unfinished projects then set to work. Miss Edmunds goes to one of the children beginning a project. She reviews with him the first steps and if necessary helps him learn a certain skill or technique. One day, for example, Nellie started making a dress of feed bags. As Nellie measured the skirt and cut it, Miss Edmunds stood near and showed her how to pin the edges together and baste the seam before stitching it on the machine. In this way Nellie made her first seam a straight one and had a feeling of success.

Then Miss Edmunds moved on to help a boy who had not quite decided what to do. Meanwhile Nellie studied the pattern that she was going to use for the blouse of her dress and decided how to lay it on the goods to avoid waste in cutting. Miss Edmunds moved back to her in time to help her lay the pattern for the back on a lengthwise fold of the goods.

Miss Edmunds later said that the children's activity had influenced their homes. Curtains were made for windows. Scarves were placed on dresser tops that once had been cluttered surfaces. The children seemed to have a feeling of achievement in making things and seeing them used.

Children Learn To Get Along Together

A one- or two-room school is a laboratory in which boys and girls learn to help those who are younger. If a 7-year-old needs help that an older child can give, he asks for it. He learns gradually to have proper consideration for the other's convenience. A 12- or 14-year-old, expecting to be ready for high school in a year, tries to find ways of being useful in helping younger pupils to learn and to get along well together. Learning to understand and deal with young children is a part of this older child's education for home and family living, and it also helps him develop poise and self-confidence.

A job especially important in rural schools is helping children learn how to work cooperatively. Pupils learn to discuss things in groups and, after the facts have been considered, to arrive at group decisions. They learn to accept responsibility for carrying out tasks agreed upon cooperatively. They develop a feeling of responsibility to others. They learn to abide by the combined decisions of their group. The teacher is regarded as a member of the group, an older friend, and a source of help and information when needed.

In Groups Children Learn To Work Cooperatively

By providing wise and appropriately guided experiences, the teacher helps boys and girls learn to direct their own activities. Her methods and progress depend upon what the parents as well as the children expect of her. In a school that has been controlled by the authority of the teacher with rules laid down by her and with physical or psychological punishments for breaking rules, a teacher has to establish a new order a little at a time.

A teacher's first step may be to study the attitudes of the community and get acquainted with the parents. The understanding she gains thus will help her know what improvements to initiate and how fast to go. Her next step may be to help the pupils as a group to take full responsibility for just a few activities. Some teachers take this step by helping the children learn to plan their lessons or some of their study activities independently, to discuss their problems and difficulties, to evaluate their success together, and to decide upon the kind of order and ways of working that will bring still greater success. Others give children responsibility for some of the mechanical order of the classroom, such as leaving one's seat to get a drink, sharpening a pencil, getting an encyclopedia, or asking a classmate for help without first getting permission from the teacher.

To give even small amounts of freedom to a group of pupils not used to it is not an easy step. It is much easier to go along in an atmosphere of expecting pupils to accept direction, to wait to be told, and to carry out instructions than it is to help them learn to use freedom and direct their own activities wisely; but the way that is easier for the teacher may handicap the children in developing originality and creativeness.

When freedom is first given to children who are used to following directions, they do not know how to use it. Even though they are made responsible only a little at a time for their own direction, they feel a loss at first. They often confuse freedom with license; they make mistakes in directing their behavior. The more freedom given, the greater the possibilities of making mistakes.

Experienced teachers expect pupils to make mistakes and to learn from their mistakes. There will be some disturbances when children not used to controlling themselves are suddenly faced with the responsibility. When there are disturbances that really interfere with study or other work, the experienced teacher helps the pupils as a group to analyze the causes and decide how such disturbances can be prevented. Boys and girls who cause problems often change their ways when they see that the other children expect cooperation.

Boys and girls, if guided intelligently, gradually learn to take more responsibility for their behavior. They learn to ask permission less fre-

550884 O - 60 - 3

quently, not to abuse freedom. They learn to work with the group to plan systematic procedures for getting materials and for cleaning up the room after certain kinds of work have been in progress. They develop good judgment in asking one another for assistance, in moving about the room, in consulting or planning with classmates in such a way as not to disturb others who are studying, in deciding how much time to take for personal needs when faced with a task to be completed and reported to the group.

Children's success at working independently of the teacher nearly always depends on their having something worth while and interesting on hand to

Courtesy, Grace Stewart, Supervisor, Tuscarawas County, Ohio

When the teacher is busy with others, we read, play, work with puzzles.

do when other work has been completed—interesting individual or small-group projects which can be taken up or laid aside at any time.

In one school, for example, Hilda, a little girl of 10, had a diary that she had kept for 2 years. Nearly every day she used her spare moments to write in it, some days more than others. John had a collection of rocks and minerals and spent much of his free time reading about them and classifying and labeling his specimens. Marie and Doris worked happily with a collection of dolls, making dresses and other clothes for them out of scraps of cloth, paper, and feedbags; and learning to be creative and cooperative.

In some schools, clay to make what they please is interesting to young children. Boxes, blocks, wooden animals, and other playthings brought from home are good materials for imaginative play. Checkers, dominoes, figures and words on cards, matching games, and other games are made educative as well as interesting. In connection with their reading, older

boys and girls often become interested in educative projects, such as making clothing, gardening, feeding animals, making toys and objects for home or school, school newspapers, bird study, conservation activity including nature trails if the schoolground is near woods, stamp collections, sewing, woodwork, leatherwork, weaving, rug-making, basketry, and making electrical questioners, an anemometer, and a Who's Who for the school. Children need freedom to use initiative in selecting and planning their actvities.

Helpful examples of cooperative learning activities in a rural school and community are shown in the film entitled *School in Centreville.* In this film the pupils make a list of problems related to the improvement of their own living. In solving these problems they read and study. They take trips. They interview specialists and officials in the community. Most of the ideas in *School in Centreville* are suitable for one- or two-teacher schools. The film can be purchased from the Rural Department of the National Education Association, Washington, D. C. It can be borrowed or rented from many local film libraries. Other examples of cooperative activities in one- and two-teacher schools are discussed in educational literature on rural schools. Many such references are listed in *Teaching in One- and Two-Room Schools,* described on the inside back cover of this bulletin.

Deciding What To Teach

THE EFFECTIVE CURRICULUM for one- and two-teacher schools consists of guided experiences in rural living, cooperatively selected and planned. Fannie W. Dunn describes the kind of guidance needed thus:

> Democratic guidance * * * means taking the child where and as he is and giving such direction to his experiences as will preserve and enhance his powers of independent self-activity, and will aid him to select those lines of action which are for him the best to follow.[1]

How can a teacher guide children effectively in rural living? Rural teachers study their children as individuals in a rural environment. They try to observe children's behavior from day to day. They consider each pupil's personal problems and his problems of living in his home and community. They consider his cultural background.[2]

Teachers supplement their study of children with interviews. They keep records of each child's development and of his progress in overcoming his difficulties and solving his problems. They analyze their findings. They try to discover what is significant for his personal, physical, and social development. They try to help children bring about curricular situations in which they can solve their problems, at least to their own satisfaction at the time.

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[1] *Guidance in Rural Schools.* Fannie W. Dunn, *ed.* Washington, D. C., National Education Association, 1942. p. 15. (Yearbook 1942, The Department of Rural Education, National Education Association.)

[2] See also, *The Child in the Rural Environment,* Yearbook 1951, Rural Department of the National Education Association, Washington, D. C. 253 p.

Curricular Activities Are Selected To Meet Growth Needs *of Boys and Girls in the Country*

The modern rural curriculum provides guided experiences in several areas of growth, including health and physical development, social growth, and the development of self-realization and self-esteem.

Health and physical development

To keep healthy and achieve all-round and well-coordinated development, a child requires a healthful environment in school and home; healthful school living, including a wholesome daily balance of play, relaxation, sleep, work, study; opportunity to learn the facts and skills required for healthful living; guidance in evaluating his progress toward a goal for health that means the best possible life for him. Modern rural schools cooperate with parents in helping each pupil in his job of keeping healthy. The aim is to provide opportunity for a series of properly balanced experiences from year to year. Only in this way can proper provisions be made for necessary nutrition, health examinations and tests, protection from communicable diseases, and all the other requirements for good health. Sanitation and cleanliness in school and home and a balanced program of work and play are brought about cooperatively. Freedom from fear is assured and undue excitement or emotional stress are avoided.[3]

In the one- or two-room school, teachers and pupils have certain responsibilities for healthful living that are different from those of the larger school. When examinations and other physical tests are not provided in school, the assistance of parents is needed in getting children to doctors. Younger children require more frequent periods of rest and play than older pupils. The latter help keep games safe for the little ones.

Social needs

As soon as a child is old enough to respond to other people, he begins to show personality. He displays feelings of fear, uneasiness, confidence, or pleasure. Desire for affection persists through life. A child's happiness is a partial indication that he is loved and secure in his relations with people. Other evidences of satisfactory personality growth are a child's cooperativeness with other children or adults; his reactions to criticisms; his creativeness, imagination, and originality; his ideals; his ability to impress his companions favorably; his adjustment to the culture in which he lives.

In order that a child's social needs may be met, his teacher observes his behavior in relation to other children and adults. Through things he does

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[3] *Health, Physical Education and Recreation in Small Schools*, and *Physical Education in Small Schools*. (Elsa Schneider, *ed.*) Washington, D. C., National Education Association.

Playground Equipment That Helps Children Grow. Washington, D. C. Federal Security Agency. (Federal Security Agency, Office of Education Brief No. 16).

and says, she tries to understand his personal problems in meeting his goals. She tries to provide experiences in which he will get satisfaction. She may arrange for him to work in groups with boys and girls he likes or with those who have the same learning problems. One of her aims is to help him gain the approval of his young friends and to contribute to the activities they value.

Guidance in connection with 4–H Club activities, Rural Boy and Girl Scouts, and civiç services may be provided. Junior Audubon Clubs as part of the curriculum are often helpful for the social development of rural children; Junior Conservation Clubs are organized in some schools. The rural community is part of each country child's widening environment, and many rural schools provide curriculum activities that give the pupils experience in community improvement.[4]

Self-realization and self-esteem

The country school can do much to help each child realize that he is an individual, different from everyone else, with abilities, feelings, and ways of thinking all his own; with a body that he can in many ways develop, improve, coordinate, make skillful, and keep healthy. The school can lead each one to seek pleasure and satisfaction in being what he is. The school can aid him in learning to be helpful and happy in his rural environment with increasing ability to understand himself and his relation to the ways of country living all around him.

In a literate society such as ours, there are certain life goals that all children want to achieve as a means of fitting happily into ways of life around them. Among such goals are ability to read and write, to work with numbers, and to perform other skills that people use in further learning. Good modern curriculums are so planned that each child can achieve his goals to the extent that will be best for him and give him a sense of accomplishment.

Children gain self-esteem in a variety of ways. Making a bowl or animal from clay, if it is original and creative, may satisfy a certain child in one situation. Approval of his young companions for a contribution to the solution of a group problem may be important to another. Learning to swim may give still another child the satisfaction he needs for a time. When he achieves the self-esteem sought, he will of course revise or change his goal, and the process of achieving his new aim will begin.

Everyday Experiences Are Sources of Suitable Curricular Activities

The modern school accepts responsibility for children's out-of-school learning experiences as well as for their in-school learning. The curriculum is

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[4] *See also:* Petersburg Builds a Health Program. Washington, U. S. Government Printing Office, 1949. 50 p. (Federal Security Agency, Office of Education, Bulletin 1949, No. 9.)

made up of both types of experience. In planning an all-day program, rural teachers can become acquainted with each child in his home life early in the school term. This is one of the best ways for teachers in any school to help boys and girls have the right educational experiences. Rural teachers who are residents of the communities where they teach often know their pupils in their homes before they come to school. With a background of information teachers can help children decide on problems, and find ways of working on them. Areas of living around which the curriculum can be organized include: (1) activities of home, school, and farm; (2) recreation, play, fun; (3) comunity understanding and service; (4) keeping up with the world; and (5) study skills. In the pages that follow, there are suggestions to help teachers identify problems and experiences in each area.

Activities of home, school, and farm

The country child is close to most of the activities that keep the home and farm running smoothly, partly because his mother lets him help her as she works. A boy's creative ideas may be painted into the design on the wood box or in the colorful figure in the flower bed on the lawn, or expressed in some other home-like way. A girl may think of decorative touches for the table when the family has a guest. If the family is truly democratic, the child has a part in family councils. At his level of understanding, he shares many of the adult problems of the farm, such as providing scientifically balanced feed for pigs and chickens.

Whatever the child's responsibility may be, there are often ways in which his work in school can help him fulfill the home responsibility better or make his tasks more interesting. Let us say he gets an idea about conservation on his home farm, perhaps to protect birds in the wood lot or improve the soil in his garden. The school can become his source of information; the farm is his laboratory and workshop. Subject matter related to everyday living is studied and used to improve these life activities.

Life in the country home may bring a child into touch with rural magazines and newspapers; with radio programs of interest to country people; with fields, gardens, and other sources of growing things; with modern farm and home equipment; and with the need for scientific care of all of them. To improve this kind of life and help to make it contribute to healthy personality growth for every child is a cooperative responsibility of the school and home.

In the country, children usually have some part in producing the family income. Often they earn their incomes instead of receiving a monthly allowance. They may, for example, gather and sell eggs or help with the gardening and sell part of the produce. They may have money-producing projects separate from the family activities, as Future Farmers of America and 4–H Club members have. They have first-hand experiences in managing and spending and reinvesting the money earned. Opportunity to

increase their own or families' income may serve as a stabilizing influence on boys and girls who are disturbed by income problems.

In such activities, schools help children get enjoyment and understanding otherwise overlooked. For example, teachers help boys and girls find information on money-making projects, such as borrowing money with which to buy calves to raise, keeping bees, stripping bluegrass, growing flowers, and raising poultry. When children do things that have value to them, they are ready to use and master the fundamentals of reading, writing, language, and arithmetic that they need. More than this, they achieve wholesome personality growth through reaching a goal that their society of adults and young companions approves.

Courtesy, Tallapoosa School, Carroll County, Ga.

We landscape our schoolground.

Sometimes schools do more than improve home activities. In the Georgia school referred to on page 7, the fourth grade supervises the school cooperative store. They function as a board of directors. Pupils of all grades are stockholders. The boys and girls are customers. Through their cooperative, the children gain ability to add, multiply, subtract, and divide. They manage real money. They gain facility in working together. They learn to plan jointly and democratically. They experience the courtesies involved in buying and selling.[4a]

[4a] White, Mary, *and* Woodruff, Wilda. *The Sand Hill Story. In* Journal of the National Education Association, March 1950, reprint. p. 204–5.

In another school, the children worked to improve their nutrition. The school helped them study foods and learn to prepare wholesome lunches. In connection with the lunches, the pupils learned about balancing supper and breakfast. When the children asked their fathers and mothers to help them, parents, boys and girls, and teacher worked together. The study was not limited to a single lesson. It spread out from day to day. Parents, teacher, and children all had a part. The story is told in *A Nutrition Education Workshop Pays Dividends.*[5]

What can schools do to help boys and girls have an interesting or better quality of living in the community where they now live? Can schools do anything to help children have, for example, better food, clothing, and housing, or at least to get more pleasures out of activities connected with them? With guidance from the Sloan Foundation, groups of schools in Kentucky, Vermont, and Florida have attacked these problems.

In their study of the problems, the schools developed new reading materials. These helped the boys and girls engage in practical projects in school. They aroused the children's interest in improving ways of living at home. What the boys and girls studied in school, they attempted to carry out or to study further in their homes.[6]

The foregoing activities and experiences can be achieved most fully when school and home cooperate. Since the teacher is regarded as the specialist as far as the child's education is concerned, she is the one who can best take the initiative in keeping in touch with parents and in bringing about desirable cooperation. In addition to working with individual homes, she often finds parent-teacher clubs and other groups to be a source of cooperation and help.

Recreation, play, fun

Schools provide for informal recreation and relaxation, as well as for organized and planned play. In some States a few schools sponsor a limited amount of camping experience as part of the curriculum. In camping, rural children increase their appreciation of the outdoors, so much a part of their daily living and so often neglected.

Fun in the country may range from a child's pleasure in a flock of young chicks to the creative satisfaction he gets when he sees the first leaves of the watermelons that he has planted, or the excitement of a secret house or hide-out in the wood lot, where perhaps he plays with hoarded cast-off machinery, dishes, boxes, boards, and logs. Freedom to grow, space to play without restraint, and opportunities for the exercise of initiative, originality, and imagination are usually characteristic of rural children's lives.

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[5] *A Nutrition Education Workshop Pays Dividends.* Minneapolis, Minn., Education Section, General Mills, Inc., 1949. 30 p.

[6] Olson, Clara M., *and* Fletcher, Norman D. *Learn and Live.* New York, Alfred P. Sloan Foundation, Inc., 1946. 101 p.

550884 O - 60 - 4

Free and close at hand for rural children may be facilities for active sports, such as ice skating, coasting, skiing, horseback riding, hiking, wading, and swimming. Among these and other possible activities, the teacher helps each child find something to make his day richer and more interesting. She keeps in touch with the parents about what is best for each child.

Community understanding and service

Boys and girls in rural communities have more important contacts with their communities than merely "using community resources" as a way of getting information. For a child, belonging to a community is somewhat like belonging to a family. In the community, a child has his playmates. He has adult friends outside his family whose opinions he values. A child is influenced by what his community considers right or valuable. He needs activities that enable him to identify himself with community life around him.

Children learn to take pride in and to improve their community. Take the Oak Mountain two-teacher school in Georgia, for example. No one was happier than the children when their school grounds of several wooded acres were selected as a site for a community chapel and a recreation center. They were pleased when given opportunity to discuss the ways in which the community would be served.

Through friendly associations with the young architect who came to plan and even help with the building, the pupils grew to appreciate the appropriateness of the particular type of architecture used. They came to share the architect's hopes and aspirations for the undertaking and gained some understanding of the joy that comes through creativeness. They worked with him at such chores as they were able to do. They helped in making the pool around which people might sit and meditate. They cleared away debris and made openings to let water in and out. They pounded gravel and poured cement. They selected and planted appropriate flowers and vines around the pool and cared for them. They learned something of the satisfaction that comes from accepting responsibility for tasks and successfully performing them. Through the activity the children learned to plan and work together better. They improved their ability to report interesting experiences to others.

Keeping up with the world

Country children are drawn into world happenings today more than ever when significant world and local radio broadcasts are listened to by rural family groups. Many rural schools include news of the day in the morning planning hour. Questions suggested by programs heard at home are followed up in bulletins and encyclopedias during the school day. Books and maps are used to locate places mentioned. Historical facts may be used to help boys and girls understand what led up to present problems and situations.

The children get more and more experience in reading from different textbooks, bulletins, and reference books. The teacher is a close observer of progress and helps individuals to overcome difficulties and improve their understanding and their skill in gaining information.

Study skills

Most phases of normal living are enriched by the right school program. While curricular experiences in rural living especially increase children's personal and social growth and development, they afford also opportunities for improvement of ability in reading, writing, spelling, speaking, and doing arithmetic. Pupils read, not to pronounce words, but to get and use the thoughts on the printed page. Attractive new books, practical bulletins, newspapers, and children's magazines are on the classroom shelves. These are often read as assiduously as the school readers, although the teacher makes good use of the latter in teaching the children *how* to read.

Boys and girls write and spell, not to copy letters 10 or 20 times (each time a little worse than the last) or fill a page with meaningless t's, a's, or w's, but to communicate ideas to friends as quickly and clearly and effectively as possible. The writing they do includes letters to friends far away, orders for materials or equipment for gardens or summer recreation, acknowledgments to people who have been kind, travel notes, and other kinds of letter writing done in school and mailed.

Children learn to figure, not to see what big numbers and long columns they can manipulate, but to solve the problems of number in their daily rural living. Textbooks are used as needed in learning fundamental processes. Always attention is given to the meaning back of the figures and processes. Problems of budgeting and of income or allowance are solved in real situations in school. Children actually buy and sell. They learn the ways of measuring used on the farm and in the rural home. Through such activities with practice as needed, children learn to add, multiply, subtract, and divide skillfully and with understanding.

The Rural Community *Is a Guide in Selecting Curricular Activities*

A significant point of view is expressed by the Second Conference of Leaders in Elementary Education, Washington, D. C. It indicates desirable school-community relationship in the development of curriculum as follows:

> (The elementary school is at its best) when it centers on the child growing up in the culture of the community. Its curriculum grows out of the child's needs, problems, and experiences. Rooted in the lives of the learners and the local community, it reaches far beyond the immediate environment. It develops the children's knowledge and understanding of the relationship between personal and community activities and problems, and the activities and problems of people in other com-

> munities and environment throughout the Nation and the world. It selects and organizes the subject matter which is needed for this purpose and which is appropriate to the growth levels of the children using it.[7]

Certainly the rural school is at its best when it centers the curriculum on the child growing up in the culture of the particular rural community in which he lives.

Community history, structure, and resources

To help their boys and girls learn how to take part in the work of the community, rural teachers are trying to understand the organizations that make up their communities. They are studying goals, history, and programs of local groups and cooperating in their services.

The teachers of the Nambè (New Mexico) Community School, for example, studied the structure of that community, which is largely Spanish-speaking, and prepared to help the boys and girls to get the kind of experiences that meant the most to them in this bilingual culture.[8] The next step was planning with the children for improvement of ways of living.

Experiences for children

A group of school teachers in Warren County, N. J., took as a theme for study one year: Better Living for Children of Warren County.[9] In keeping with this theme, they tried to help the children get three types of experience. For example, they arranged for boys and girls to experience the richness and beauty of the community. They helped pupils individually and in groups to have a part in community improvement. They made it possible for all pupils to begin to extend their experience and understanding outside their local environment into the great world beyond.

In Plumstead Township's Southwestern School, a one-teacher school near Doylestown, Pa., the pupils and Mrs. Helen S. Gayman, their teacher, often draw on the community for some of their school experiences. The old art of the Pennsylvania Dutch has been unusually fascinating to the boys and girls and adults of the community. In one of the children's community-study projects the children became interested in decorating and enameling trays and other tole ware with Pennsylvania Dutch designs, which they learned to develop creatively.[10]

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[7] *Conference of Leaders in Elementary Education.* Report of Second Conference, Washington, D. C., May 20–22, 1948. Out of print.

[8] Tireman, Loyd S. Community School in a Spanish-Speaking Village. Albuquerque, N. Mex., University of New Mexico Press, 1948. 169 p.

[9] Dunn, Fannie W. From *The Rural Supervisor at Work*, p. 79. Yearbook, February 1949, Department of Rural Education, National Education Association, Washington, D. C. Marcia A. Everett, *ed.*

[10] *Where Children Live Affects Curriculum.* Washington, U. S. Government Printing Office, 1950. (Federal Security Agency, Office of Education Bulletin 1950, No. 7.) p. 59.

There was seldom time enough in school for all the art work the children wanted to do. Finally a workshop was planned for the summer months. Mrs. Gayman offered to meet with the pupils each week during the vacation months. Each summer there have been 10 to 16 children from the one-room school of the district and from the high school in a neighboring town where the children went after graduation from the rural school. Most of the children live two, three, or more miles from the school. They ride their bicycles to art class. The work is done in the schoolroom around the long tables used by the children during the year for their group projects. Last year, the third year of the project, textile painting was added to the summer program.

Courtesy, Effie McGuire, Oak Mountain School, Carroll County, Ga.

We conserve the soil on our schoolground.

As a result of the plan, the children have developed an appreciation of the beauty of the craft work of the Pennsylvania Dutch. It has stimulated them to treasure much heretofore unappreciated handwork wrought by their ancestors two generations ago. Both direct descendants of the Pennsylvania Dutch and newcomers to the district have increased regard for the heritage of the region in which they live.

Julia Weber, author of *My Country School Diary*,[11] also puts improve-

[11] Weber, Julia. *My Country School Diary: An Adventure in Creative Teaching*, 1946. 270 p., illus.

ment of living high among considerations in helping boys and girls select activities of the curriculum.

Two documentary motion pictures show the desirability of improving rural living through the school program.[12] A documentary film of a different type shows the kind of curriculum that can be developed to help children in a rural community understand problems and services of the community and to develop better ways of living.[13]

Cooperation of school and community

Certain rural towns in West Virginia have developed school-community cooperation as part of the curriculum. Petersburg developed a community program beginning with health activities. The work was first done by teachers and children. It later included other adults. Committees of children went into the community to learn the ways in which restaurants keep food clean and sanitary, to study the handling of garbage, to look over a site for a recreation park, and to study other civic services.

To make reports to the rest of the school and to plan for the school's part in community services and improvement, the children tried to increase their ability to read facts, to compute and get meaning from figures, and to express ideas clearly and impressively. But the best part of the program was enrichment of the children's social experiences and improvement of the quality of their living.

In Culloden, W. Va., the school staff saw the need for the development of a program of school improvement that would spread into the community and gain the cooperation of the parents and, through them, of the Parent-Teacher Association in a still larger program of school and community development. In starting the project, the staff first studied the school and home environments and then worked with the children, keeping their emphasis on the work of the school.

In the programs, the school staffs had for their initial goal a more nearly adequate development of rural boys and girls. As soon as pupils and teachers looked about them for important things to learn and do, community problems and resources came into the picture. Although the projects were carried out in graded schools, not one- or two-teacher schools, teachers in one- and two-teacher schools may get useful ideas from them. The two projects are described in *Petersburg Builds a Health Program* [14] and *Culloden Improves Its Curriculum.*[15]

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[12] *And So They Live.* (25 min. 16-mm., sound, black and white, 1940), and *Children Must Learn.* 13 min. 16-mm., sound, black and white, 1940.) New York University Film Library, New York, N. Y.

[13] *School in Centerville.* (20 min., 16-mm., sound, color, 1950.) Southern Educational Film Production Service, Atlanta, Ga.

[14] *Petersburg Builds a Health Program.* Washington, U. S. Government Printing Office, 1949. (Federal Security Agency, Office of Education, Bulletin 1949, No. 9.) 50 p.

[15] *Culloden Improves Its Curriculum.* Washington, U. S. Government Printing Office, 1951. (Federal Security Agency, Office of Education, Bulletin 1951, No. 2.) 24 p.

Curriculum Guides and Courses of Study Suggest Information

Has the teacher any guide for teaching when the curriculum is based on children's interests, personalities, and needs, instead of being limited by grade lines, fixed subject matter, and textbooks? The answer is that newer curriculum guides and up-to-date courses of study are made for the purpose of giving the teacher just such help. Each may serve a slightly different purpose.

Teachers use a curriculum guide to understand the philosophy of the school, and to help them in developing a curriculum framework. They look at a curriculum guide when they wish to help their pupils summarize and evaluate their curricular activities, and sometimes to diagnose the children's difficulties in learning fundamental skills and help them improve.

Teachers may turn to a course of study when they want facts for the enrichment of learning experiences. Skills and subject matter in a course of study today are not set out to be learned in logical sequence. They do not need to be. They can be used as the children need them in solving their own problems of living. Every class, group, or individual may organize the information he uses in a different way. The course of study thus becomes an aid, not a legal code or a strait-jacket.

Planning

IN ANY one- or two-teacher school, the great spread of interest and abilities among the children adds to the problem of school planning.

Superintendent and Teacher Plan Before the Term Begins

In the case of two-teacher schools, the school work is divided between the teachers. This does not always mean that the teachers have the same number of grades or the same pupils at all times. When there are fewer pupils in the upper grades than in the lower, the superintendent and the school board may plan for the first three grades of an eight-grade school to be taught by one teacher and the last five grades by the other. For a six-grade school, the organization may be either a 2–4 or a 3–3 plan.

Some superintendents assign a smaller number of children to the teacher of younger pupils because younger boys and girls require more of a teacher's time than older pupils. Other superintendents favor a more nearly equal distribution of pupils because the teacher of the upper grades may need to use much time in teaching children how to locate information they need for their problems or projects. This means that the teacher of older boys and girls must be prepared on subject matter not required by teachers of younger pupils. The desirable division of grades and work depends upon the experience the boys and girls have had in planning and working both by themselves and in groups.

Before school begins, the local school board usually arranges for cleaning and equipping the schoolroom. The teacher may be requested to advise on materials and equipment needed, especially if she has taught in the

school before. Usually a rural teacher who expects to teach in a particular school for the first time tries to be in the community for a few days before school opens. In this way she is able to visit the county superintendent, or the supervisor if there is one, to learn about administrative arrangements, and to plan cooperatively for the important first days of school.

The Teacher Plans Ahead of Her Pupils

At its best, the modern rural school is a place where children who live in the country can learn to plan together for better ways of rural living, to work, to evaluate within reason their experiences, and then to plan and work further. In order to have this kind of school, the teacher does a certain type of planning in advance of the pupils.

Planning ahead for teaching

Planning ahead of the children does not mean that the teacher forces a list of goals and activities upon the pupils. Such planning is best done by teacher and children together. Planning ahead of the pupil does mean that the teacher considers the activities and study that she needs to carry on herself in order to be better prepared to plan the real curriculum with the boys and girls.

Experiences that boys and girls have in home and community are as important for learning as their activities in school. One type of experience enriches the other. In planning for herself, the teacher may jot down major areas of the children's everyday experiences. Then she may set down the steps that she will take in helping the pupils decide what they need to learn, when will be the best time for various activities, and in which groups individual pupils will work.

The emphasis of the teacher's planning is on what she needs to do in order to help the pupils use what they learn to best advantage. This kind of initial planning was done by the teachers who later developed with their pupils the schedules on pages 41 to 43. Initial teacher-planning was also done ahead of the teacher-pupil planning discussed on pages 33 to 40.

Planning use of materials

Teachers in one- and two-teacher schools try to have on hand the kind of books, bulletins, maps, and flat pictures that are useful to children who live in the country. They know what motion pictures, film slides, and film strips can be secured from the superintendent's office. They see that materials are available at the right time and so well organized that the children can take them out, use them, and put them away neatly without undue help.

The teacher is guided by the major areas of the children's everyday experiences, pages 18 and 19, and by the *problems* on which individuals or

groups are working. Everyday problems of living require simple information. She selects books that help children in practical ways, as in planning a home flower garden for bouquets at different seasons; or in making the schoolroom more attractive; or in finding out why clover is a good crop in the home community; or in learning to plan wise use of money; or in building a child's wagon.

The teacher also keeps in mind the different *abilities* of her boys and girls and tries to see that they have things to read that they can understand. She looks for books that are readable and free from complex sentences and to many unfamiliar words.

The teacher also considers the *individual interests of the children.* Are they going to read for enjoyment? If so, a book on trees is not helpful or interesting for a child who is enthusiastic about dogs, the stars, or chemistry, and not about trees. At the same time, every child ought to be introduced to many types of interesting information closely related to his experience, yet leading on from it.

Rural teachers often plan opportunities for their children to read more magazines than they usually get. These include magazines on rural life and about rural resources and environment.

Some rural counties have bookmobiles. This service can be especially useful to rural schools when teachers and librarians plan together to help children solve the problems of a real-life curriculum that leads to better living in the country.[1]

Country children listen to the radio. In school the modern teacher tries to help her pupils develop standards for selecting radio programs. She plans ways of preparing them for the news, markets, and other programs to which the entire farm family frequently turns. She plans ways of teaching them not only to listen, but to listen with understanding and to contribute to school and family discussions which may follow.

Planning is required for use of phonograph records. When adapted to the curricular activities of country children, these are especially helpful in one- and two-teacher schools. They can have value in themselves and as a means of instruction that the children can use frequently without the teacher. With the aid of phonograph records, older boys and girls can learn to sing and to supervise some of the singing of younger pupils. Recordings of stories well told are occasionally useful to certain groups while the teacher works with other groups. Choral-speaking records, wisely chosen, are helpful when several children who are learning to read poetry in unison use them for ideas, rhythm, and interpretation.[2]

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[1] *Rural Library Service.* Washington. United States Government Printing Office, 1949. 32 p. (United States Department of Agriculture, Farmer's Bulletin, 1947.)

[2] *See also:* Phonograph Records as Aids to Learning. *The Journal of Educational Psychology,* October 1943. p. 385–406.

Teachers plan for boys and girls to have a wide choice of materials.[3] In this way they learn how to judge materials—to choose the best for a particular purpose. In one-room schools, because of the variety of interests and abilities to be served, supplementary materials vary in complexity from a simple display of three or four picture books arranged on a reading table for primary children, to specimens, collections, and home equipment for older pupils to use in connection with science.

Part of a teacher's planning is to decide what uses she can help the children make of materials, displays, and exhibits. Pupils often keep bulletin boards. Usually committees of pupils help individuals put up materials with a view to keeping the total effect artistic. In Petersburg, W. Va., boys and girls maintain a public bulletin board by the town bank.[4] Children often have individual hobbies, and some schools plan hobby shows each year at which boys and girls and adults display things made.

A one-room school in Minnesota developed a museum. In working with this, the boys and girls learned to organize, display, and use materials of the community. The museum was started when a boy found a curious-looking boot-shaped rock and brought it to school. Teacher and other children were interested.

"It's such an unusual shape," Miss Nelson, the teacher, said. "Will you let us keep it on display for a while? Perhaps one of the children will want to send it to the State museum to find out how it was formed."

Soon other rocks were brought to school. Then came shells, pine cones, bird nests, Indian relics, and fossils. Nearly everything that any boy or girl brought was found to have an interesting background. When curious-minded youngsters began to ask questions, parents sent things to school: A sampler made in 1830, a 125-year-old agate penholder from England, a pewter mold 75 years old, and a German beer stein dating back a century. These, and many more items, each with a bit of history, were added to the museum. At first they seemed odd and unrelated. Relationships were found when the children looked into the history of the different items. In the museum now are collections from many countries and a display of articles from different Indian tribes.

Sometimes school museums are not as useful as they might be because the children have little part in studying, identifying, labeling, and organizing materials. The displays too often are unrelated to the other activities of the curriculum and are left on the shelves to gather dust. When this happens, the museum that might be a rich source of learning becomes just a

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[3] See also: *Materials of Instruction.* New York, Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1935. 242 p. (Eighth Yearbook of the Department of Supervisors and Directors of Instruction of the National Education Association.)

[4] *Petersburg Builds a Health Program.* Washington. U. S. Government Printing Office, 1949. (Federal Security Agency, Office of Education, Bulletin 1949, No. 9.) p. 46.

worn-out curio shop of little real use. Organizing, labeling, and using are the jobs that skillful teachers help their children learn to do.

Miss Nelson helped the children to group related objects. The rocks were put in one collection; the fossils, arrowheads, and other relics, in another; the pine cones, coconuts, Spanish moss, and specimens of different kinds of wood, in still another. Items were labeled with names and interesting facts. She also encouraged the children to box collections and put away those not in use. This made space for the active collections. When a boxed collection was needed, it was put on display.

In one- and two-teacher schools, especially, children learn to free the teacher for teaching by looking after their own materials. When one job is done, they put away in proper places the crayons, construction paper, or sewing materials that have been used. Without asking the teacher, they get out the library books or bulletins that they need for the next job.

This independence of children is achieved by the teacher's planning and by teacher-pupil planning. Children cannot use their materials independently unless the teacher helps them anticipate their need for the materials and plans with them to keep things in proper places. Cupboards along the wall with pigeonholes low enough for even young children to reach are necessary. If such cupboards are not built into the schoolhouse, the older children make them from vegetable crates. Boxes or baskets for scissors, painted coffee cans for clay, jars for paste within the reach of the children who use them most, places for games and puzzles and other toys are necessary. Teacher and children discuss the importance of putting things back in proper

Courtesy, Sioux City Iowa Journal. Photo by Rispalje.

We learn a lot through our museum.

places after use instead of heaping them in corners or on window ledges.

Each child needs a place on a shelf or in a cabinet for unfinished work, such as a booklet, a half-braided mat, a piece of pottery in an unfinished stage. Although the responsibility of keeping things where they belong is the child's, the teacher has to make suggestions to help him learn. To be ready to give such guidance, she has to plan.

Again the teacher plans ahead for best times for children to learn such techniques as making and using index cards. She may need to aid them in making boxes to hold the cards that help them find information. Boxes are used for classifying and preserving pictures, clippings, and maps.[5]

Planning ways for children to become self-directive

A bit at a time, children learn to be self-directive. The teacher plans ways of helping them develop efficient ways of working. Children learn gradually, for example, to move quietly about the room without first asking the teacher's permission. They learn not to ask questions of the teacher when she is working with others, whether in class periods or independent periods. Each day the teacher plans with the children to make it unnecessary for them to interrupt her. She may, for example, help to arrange a place for encyclopedias or other reference books on a table near the group of pupils who will be using them most. This prevents unnecessary walking about the room. She may write on the blackboard the page references in bulletins for children who have not learned to use indexes or tables of contents without help. In due time, of course, she will teach these children to locate facts in the usual ways. If two or three children are going to need help with new or strange words as they prepare their reading lesson, the teacher assigns this job to an older child who needs the social development which such an activity will mean for him.

Teachers and Pupils Plan Together

Boys and girls of the entire school take part in planning school-wide enterprises. Activities of committees and small groups may be planned just by the pupils who take part. Always the teacher either plans with the children or supervises their independent planning as needed.

Planning the school for good living

Going to a new one-teacher school at the close of the summer, Josephine Evans, a rural teacher, found that the schoolhouse and grounds, though clean, were unusually drab and unattractive. Her first reaction was to rebudget mentally the small personal bank account which would have to meet her financial needs until the first pay day.

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[5] See also *Materials of Instruction*, p. 118–148.

"I simply must buy some colorful curtains and perhaps some paint to fix up this bare-looking schoolroom," she thought. "It needs to be put in order, too. I wonder if I can do all that before school begins?"

That evening the little girl of the family with whom Miss Evans lived showed her a ruffled colorful skirt of a homemade dressing table.

"It's lovely, Betty," said Miss Evans. "Wherever did your mother find such a pretty piece of print?"

"*I* found it myself," said Betty. "I bought it on a remnant counter in the store, and cut it to fit and tacked it on."

"There's an idea for me," said Miss Evans to herself, noticing Betty's emphasis on her own activity. "We'll fix up that schoolroom together, the children and I. That will be useful art experience for them. It will afford practice in buying, too." The smile she gave the little girl was a compliment on the dressing table plus a "thank you" for a useful idea.

The first day of school Miss Evans discovered that the children were accustomed to having places for materials. The problem of teaching them to help plan was not as great as she had feared. She asked, "Where shall we put the things we're going to use?" Suggestions came from them, and places were temporarily assigned for different materials.

Arranging the room for work.—At first, Miss Evans arranged materials in order in cupboards, but not as yet where children could get them without her direction. Books were on shelves ready to be passed out as needed. Miss Evans also wrote suggestions on the blackboard so that the older boys and girls might go ahead with regular work while she started primary children. Seats were stationary. Miss Evans wanted them to be unscrewed, but knew they could not be changed immediately because the pupils were not ready to make good use of movable seats. She hoped to get new seats or to loosen the old ones as soon as the children were ready to work in flexible groups.

When recess came, the problem of what to do with construction paper, paints, clay, reference books, and other materials with which the children were working arose. Again teacher and children made temporary arrangements.

A good working arrangement was not accomplished all at once. More cabinets and boxes were needed. Some of the children volunteered to make shelves. During the year it was necessary to make changes now and then for different kinds of projects and activities. Later, for example, the children borrowed an unused table from a neighbor and used it for a science center near a window. At one end they placed an aquarium for fish and sufficient plants for food. At the other end they placed a collection of rocks and minerals found in the community. In the drawer they put magnets, magnifying glasses, and other small equipment frequently used.[6] The room

[6] *See also* Blough, Glenn O., *and* Blackwood, Paul E. *Science Teaching in Rural and Small Town Schools.* Washington. U. S. Government Printing Office, 1949. (Federal Security Agency, Office of Education, Bulletin 1949, No. 5.) 55 p., illus.

had an alcove with windows and some shelf space. Additional shelves made the alcove into a library where children might have seclusion for study or a committee meeting when the place was not used for reading.

Arranging the room attractively.—Ways of making the room attractive were discussed. The older girls wanted color. At different times during their school experience there had been attractive drapes at the windows. Miss Evans explained the importance of having as much light as possible. She said that if the pupils should decide to use drapes, they should not be placed over the glass. The pupils discussed materials such as plastic, paper, and cloth. Pretty printed feed bags could be brought from home at little or no expense. They computed the cost of buying inexpensive plastic drapes at the store. They made comparisons.

The boys and girls learned to arrange beauty spots on shelves and table tops when the space was not needed for work. A pretty new book, for example, beside an arrangement of flowers, vegetables, or pottery made a bright spot. Such things were planned in advance so that there might not be days without exhibits and other days with too many contributions for available space.

Until frost came, the children continued to bring flowers to school. Afterwards they made winter bouquets from "everlasting" flowers and colored leaves. Miss Evans encouraged them to study flower arrangements.

Personal cleanliness and attractiveness received attention. A shelf was arranged for wash basin, soap dishes, and paper towels. Below a mirror, another shelf held a hand mirror and individual combs, each bearing its owner's name.

Making and keeping the grounds attractive.—It would take a long time, Miss Evans saw, to make the schoolyard attractive. The lawn had not been mowed regularly through the summer. There were a few large trees. These added beauty to the grounds, but there were no shrubs and no flowers. Teacher and children saw that not much could be done to improve their grounds that fall. One of the boys asked his father to mow and rake off the heaviest weeds and the children cleared away some loose brush.

"In the spring we can plant flowers," said Mary Jane.

"We can save seed from our home gardens this fall," suggested Ellen.

"We can write for seed catalogs," said Elmer. "That's the way we do at home. We can read them and plan. When spring comes, we'll be ready to plant."

The schoolyard project became a year-round undertaking. Boys and girls and their parents took responsibility for better-looking grounds. When parents planned gardens at home, pupils often proposed: "Let's do that to improve the school ground, too."

Planning for long-time projects

Certain activities extending over a long period in one- and two-teacher schools have to be planned by all the grades together. Planning a school lunch program is an example. The pupils work out the amount of supplies needed for some time ahead in order that children who bring material from home can know how much is needed and when it will be used. Tasks for which individuals and groups are responsible are planned cooperatively. Diet and menus are discussed. Landscaping and gardening are other examples of long-time curricular projects. Committees from different grades or groups are formed to prepare soil. Others agree to contribute plants or seeds. Some make layouts for plantings to be approved by the school.

In getting started on longer activities and problems, such as the conservation study mentioned on page 8, teacher and children together may look at what needs to be done first. They form their questions, and a child writes them on the board. They list tasks to be accomplished. They name sources of information and plan to locate additional sources. The teacher asks for volunteers for committees to start certain activities. She helps the group to appoint such committees if this seems desirable. Committees and working groups may be changed later as children's individual needs and interests emerge. All through their study the children as a group try to improve their work, make new plans as needed, and revise initial ones.

A two-room school in Georgia followed the practice of calling a joint meeting of the two groups, usually in the room of the older pupils, to plan together. Arrangements were made, for example, to entertain guests and show them the school and grounds. Schedules for use of playground apparatus were discussed in such meetings. Suggestions for use of radio and phonograph were talked over.

Pupils and teachers of a two-room school in Oklahoma planned a study of the community together. They made a list of persons in the community who might have information for them. In a general meeting the two rooms appointed committees to visit the homes and collect data. Later the facts were organized and written on cards, which were filed in a box. The pupils of both rooms had access to these cards.[7]

Boys and girls of grades 1 to 5 in a one-room Negro school in Virginia also planned a study of their community. Realizing that there would be an excursion with things to study and report, the pupils formed four committees or groups. At its first meeting, each group appointed its chairman. One group took responsibility for studying and reporting on dairies of the community, another group chose the newspaper, a third decided on the fire department, and the fourth group chose the motion picture *Cinderella*. After the trips the children decided to make booklets of their reports. Then for

[7] *Conservation Education in Rural Schools*. Washington, D. C., National Education Association, 1943. p. 91. (Yearbook 1943, Department of Rural Education, National Education Association.)

each of several days, a separate time was set aside for each group to plan ways of reporting in their booklet what had been learned on the trip.

Sometimes all four groups planned together in general session before going into working sessions of their own. In general session, the teacher helped with planning. Each group reported its progress of the day before and its plans for the next work period.

"Today we're going to make a cover for our booklet," reported the chairman of the dairy group one day.

"We're going to make a table of contents for our report," said Mary, speaking for the newspaper group. "We think a table of contents will help a person see what the book is about."

The other children thought so, too. They said each group ought to make a table of contents for its book. It was suggested that the four chairmen meet to discuss what a table of contents should contain and to decide where it ought to be placed in the book and how to report their findings.

The big group broke up and the four committees met for 30 minutes to carry out their group plans. The teacher moved about, answering questions. She gave extra time to the fire-department group, which contained a number of the youngest children.

The children were reviewing a story planned the day before. It was about what they saw on the way to town. When they decided how they wanted the story to read, they told it to the teacher. She wrote it on a chart.

At the close of the half-hour period the teacher asked the children to stop working and arrange their chairs in a circle for their general meeting.

"Let us hear from the fire-department group first," she said.

"We are going to make a booklet," began the chairman. "Today we made a story that tells about the things we saw on the way to town. This is our story on this chart. I will read it now:

> 'We saw a man up in an apple tree
> and some goats, houses, and cows,
> trucks, cars'."

"Is that all you have to report?" asked the teacher.

"Yes, that is all," replied the chairman.

"Tomorrow," said the teacher, "the fire-department group will start drawing the pictures for their report. Now let's hear from the people who are working in the dairy group. What did you do today?"

Each of the other three committees gave a report. The pupils discussed each report and made suggestions for its improvement for the booklet. They considered what each committee was going to do the next day. The teacher reminded all four groups that they should try to select at least one new book each day to add to the reading list that would be part of each report.

In some schools activities are planned by committees representing all grades. Each committee is decided upon in a general planning meeting. Certain schools that have special-day celebrations in which both rooms take part sometimes choose pupil committees to help the teacher make a program from suggestions contributed by the pupils of both rooms.[8] A two-room school that held a flower exchange appointed a committee from both rooms one spring to ask neighbors to contribute plants. Pupils of the two-room school in New Jersey that developed the film entitled *Living and Learning in a Rural School*[9] planned as an all-school group for interviews with residents in the community and for sharing information which they found in books and bulletins and magazines. They organized working committees of children from different grades according to their special ability for jobs and their needs for certain types of experience. The film shows the development of an all-school enterprise carried on with profit to children of different abilities, interests, and needs.

Planning each day's work

In every classroom are activities and experiences for which teacher and children have to plan together each day. In one- and two-room schools the variety of activities and experiences to be planned each day may be great.

Exchange of information and ideas.—Many schools begin the day by planning and exchanging experiences. At this time, two or three children may tell about interesting things that have happened to them. Others may report on progress made in the major enterprise or activity. A certain community, for example, was changing from the production of cotton as an income crop to cattle raising and pasture maintenance. In the school, therefore, one of the problems of upper grades was to understand the change and learn why it was necessary. Frequently, individuals or committees reported progress on the study of the problem in their planning period.

Deciding on jobs for the day.—After reports of progress and other news, children may plan work for the day. The pupils who were studying their community's farming problems, for example, usually made a list of new questions to investigate each day. After hearing reports of progress, they wrote questions on the blackboard that were incompletely answered. Individuals volunteered for new jobs. Names and jobs were written on the blackboard or chart. One boy, for instance, offered to write to the State college of agriculture for a bulletin. Another said he would consult the county agent in town on Saturday. Near the end of the undertaking, the children decided to make a book to tell the story of their enterprise and each morning planned for the day's tasks on this undertaking.

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[8] See also *Creative Ways for Children's Programs.* New York, Silver Burdett Co., 1938. p. 173–192.

[9] *Living and Learning in a Rural School.* 2 reels, 16mm., sound, black and white, 1939. New York University Film Library, New York, N. Y. (Produced by Teachers College, Columbia University.)

A certain one-teacher school planned first for things to be done in connection with the major activity. To select trees for the school ground was their big job. The pupils discussed the kind of trees to plant, the nature of the soil, the purpose to be served by the trees. They arranged to make a study of trees in the community before deciding what to plant on their school ground and each morning decided what would be done on the study that day.

The teacher wished especially to help John, Ed, Jennifer, and Nell read about the uses of different kinds of trees and organize a report. They were having trouble in locating information in encyclopedias and in getting facts to answer their questions. They had not learned to use indexes and tables of contents. They had not learned to organize reports of findings. All needed individual assistance in improving their reading ability. For several days the teacher helped them during their study periods. Eventually they were able to make a combined report on what they had read.

Courtesy, Pennsylvania State Education Department

Children in a one-room school near York, Pa., planned menus and cooked school lunch.

Other children were going to write a letter requesting books from the State library. They needed the teacher's help in getting information about letter writing from their language books. As teacher and pupils planned work for the day, they scheduled time for the teacher to work with these children.

Most of the other children planned to use the library. They could do that without the teacher's help. Some wanted information which they could find in encyclopedias. Others planned to make cards showing titles of books in which they found certain facts. For the youngest children, time was reserved for reading and storytelling with the teacher as usual and for work

by themselves looking at picture books, painting, playing quiet games, listening to the phonograph or selected programs on the radio, mounting pictures on the bulletin board, weaving, working with clay, or sewing.

Planning ahead for the week

In modern rural schools, children have a part in weekly planning as well as in daily planning. Usually the week's plan is set up by teacher and children together first thing Monday morning. The week's plan is more general than daily plans. In the Oak Mountain school referred to on page 41, for example, the following types of weekly planning are done:

Three or four children volunteer to keep the schoolroom clean and in order. This includes sweeping, dusting, and arranging furniture.

The entire group selects a different person to ask the blessing each day.

Four pupils volunteer to serve luncheon plates.

Two pupils offer to serve milk at midmorning.

Sometimes the entire group decides what opening songs will be sung each morning.

Sometimes a committee of three is selected to choose the songs from day to day.

The group assigns two pupils to bring in coal and empty ashes each day.

Daily Schedules Are Simplified

Modern schedules in one- and two-teacher schools do not look like the schedules of two or three decades ago. The 10-minute periods at one time listed along the left side of the plan have been markedly lengthened. The schedules are more likely to be in a child's handwriting instead of printed or mimeographed by a county superintendent's staff. If periods of time are designated, most of them are half an hour or more and cover a wide span of activities.

Procedures suggested by modern schedules are also different. Once daily schedules listed recitations (questions by the teacher and answers by the children) in every subject in every grade. Except for 15-minute recess periods, no other activities were provided. Pupils' planning and evaluating, exchange of ideas, trips, and clubs were conspicuously absent.

Today's schedule or program, generally speaking, includes (1) attention to the children's health and physical development; (2) chores and tasks to keep the schoolroom and school grounds attractive; (3) opportunities for children to learn to work together; (4) suggestions for individuals for working alone or with the teacher; (5) provision for cultural development or self-expression particularly in the handcrafts, art, and music; (6) teacher guidance in learning new procedures for the skills (including reading, arithmetic, spelling, and writing; (7) use and understanding of the social and economic activities of the home community and later of the State and Nation; and (8) checking on gains at the close of the day and other times.

Since some of these types of activities overlap, fewer periods appear in most schedules than the topics indicate.[10]

Oak Mountain School, the two-teacher school near Carrollton, Ga., offers an example of a modern schedule. There boys and girls make a schedule each morning. The children say "plan" not "schedule." The following is a sample plan for the day and a description of what the children did in carrying it out.

A Day With the Primary Pupils of a Two-Teacher School

Sharing and Planning

Children and teacher talked about little brothers and sisters, pets, a turtle, a little calf, a smart dog, a car being greased and why, being under a culvert when a train passed over, progress on road-grading near school, visitors coming and what to do for them, things groups and individuals were going to do that day.

Story hour

Pupils talked about books looked at the day before, with emphasis on pets; read aloud pages they liked; showed pages with interesting pictures. Teacher had previously helped select *The Grabby Pup, Boo, Seven Ducks,* and *The Little Squirrel.*

Playtime

Children engaged in free play on apparatus, in woods, or joined in games spontaneously chosen.

Practicing things we want to do better

Some children helped one another drill with flash cards on arithmetic combinations not learned well enough to use easily. Three or four 8-year-olds were having trouble understanding what they read, and the teacher was helping them begin an easy story in a second-grade reader. After helping this group and leaving them with the story to finish by themselves, the teacher helped an older group who were writing notes to the county librarian to let her know that they liked the new books she had sent.

Lunch

A neighborhood woman prepared lunch. Children took turns serving plates. Their preferences in food were considered.

Quiet Period

Children chose what to do. Some walked about the yard. Some looked at new books. Some talked with the teacher. A few painted. Two showed the guests about.

Making or enjoying things we think beautiful (handcrafts, art, music)

Pupils painted and made things that interested them. Later all sang.

Physical education (longer period than morning playtime and with guided experiences)

Children in small groups played in woods. Some dramatized *The Seven Dwarfs.* On other days pupils took part in rhythms and folk dances, games calling for

[10] *See also* Wofford, Kate V. *Teaching in Small Schools.* New York, The Macmillan Co., 1949. p. 92.

running, use of bats, balls, hoops, and ropes; hiding and seeking games; stunts and other self-testing activities; relays. The teacher knew that from day to day over a period of weeks and years there should be constant planning and evaluation among pupils, teachers, and parents to provide for a balanced, varied, and progressively developmental series of experiences.

What we accomplished

Teacher and children evaluated the day's work, looked briefly ahead. They mentioned things learned in reading, writing, and arithmetic; things to be done next day. They reminded one another of responsibilities for next day and of things to be brought to school.

Chores

Teacher and children swept and tidied the room.

In another two-teacher school, pupils of grade 4, 5, and 6 and the teacher planned ways in which certain subjects would be used in connection with a community project. Below is an example of the planning which this school did from day to day.

A Day With the Older Pupils of a Two-Teacher School

Sharing

Children reported information gathered at home on the *community project* in which the children were all engaged—ways of using our land. Farmers in the community are changing from cotton farming to cattle raising and truck farming. This means a new economy. The change is being discussed among adults. The children are interested. The community study was a center of interest in which the children drew on social studies, science, and community resources for information.

Planning

Some children planned to write letters for study material about the community. Others planned to work on posters and a school newspaper. Words hard to spell in their letters were studied. The teacher's help on individual difficulties in arithmetic was arranged for. All three grades were to work on history of the community in connection with the project. Committees had special jobs ventilating and heating the room, and keeping it in order.

Playtime

Developing Skills

English, spelling, and arithmetic skills needed for the work planned were developed in this period. New procedures were taught in meaningful ways. Extra practice was provided for skills not adequately learned through use.

Lunch

Free time

Playtime

Teacher and children took part in games they had selected together. Usually the children rather than the teacher led in these games.

Completing project work

Special attention was given to reading as a means of getting facts to solve the problems planned.

Evaluation

Teacher and children talked about the achievements and progress of the day, reminded one another of help to be sought at home or things to be brought to school next day, listed incompleted jobs to be taken up next day.

Cleaning up and putting classroom in order

"We schedule subjects formally," writes a supervisor from Montana, "but in relation to subject schedules, we intend for each child to spend his time on experiences that meet his personality needs or help him carry on activities or solve problems in which he is interested."

She explains further that the schedules are flexible enough to allow for life experiences and activities and for the teacher to help children according to their individual problems or difficulties. Different pupils or groups of pupils may have the same kinds of problems and experiences. A pupil in the sixth grade, for example, may have the same difficulty in reading as a pupil in the third grade. Another child may have no trouble in learning and using information, but may be handicapped in working with other boys and girls. All get help.

The children's basic problems are drawn from their everyday lives. They find that subject matter helps them solve their problems. Take a problem, for example, on how the children can get the best value for their money when they buy books or a bicycle or a coat. Perhaps children use their language books to learn how to write a letter to a store or a mail-order house. They need to compute the cost of having the purchase mailed parcel post, and may consult maps or arithmetic books for help. It is not the way the schedule looks that counts, but the way the children's activities are planned, organized, and carried out, and the amount of improvement made each day beyond learning of the day before.[11]

[11] *See also* Instructional Leadership in Small Schools, Washington, D. C., Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, National Education Association, 1951. p. 56–75.

Looking for Results

Through the conversation of the teachers presented in chapter I, we had a glimpse of some of the over-all problems faced by teachers in one- and two-teacher schools. Later in the bulletin we saw teachers working to solve some of these problems—considering the children's social and personal development; the selection of curriculum activities to improve the quality of living; and ways of organizing effective programs.

We Review Our Aims

Now let's sit in with another group of teachers from one- and two-room schools. They have come together in one of their regular meetings to study ways of looking for results. On this cold February afternoon a cup of coffee and a few minutes of relaxation helped to provide necessary readiness for a 2-hour session of hard work. The purpose of this afternoon's study was to find some answers to the question: "How well are we doing?"

Sue Jackson began the discussion. "As you know, we asked the parents in our school to help us decide what we should try to accomplish."

"I asked the parents, too," interrupted Catherine, "but some of mine think the school should have no other purpose than to teach reading, arithmetic, writing, and spelling. I don't believe that's enough."

"That's what some of our parents thought, too," said Joan Peterson, "but I think my parents are now beginning to see that children learn to read better when reading is an important part of a bigger program that aims to improve the quality of the children's living, even though they don't put the idea into so many words."

"I am quite sure," said Sue, "that most of our parents believe the school should help the children solve whatever problems of living they recognize.

This includes learning to use such skills as reading, spelling, writing, and arithmetic. Education to improve living also means other things. I think some of the other things are in the aims we chose for our school. Here's our chart."

The Aims for Our School

To improve the quality of living in our schools and community through learning:

1. To read, write, spell, figure, speak well, and understand what's going on right around us and far away, too.
2. To use our natural resources wisely.
3. To be concerned for the welfare of others.
4. To create beautiful and useful things.
5. To understand and get along with other people.
6. To be responsible citizens.
7. To have healthy personalities.
8. To solve our problems well.
9. To learn how to work together cooperatively.

"Those are really good aims, but how do you tell about results?" asked Annabelle Cox.

We Look for Evidence of Change

"Let me tell you what we have done," Mrs. Roberts said. "My story is just a little different. I guess every school has its own ways of stating goals. We didn't make a long list of aims, but we have worked especially hard on problem-solving techniques this year. We have worked on as many problems as possible that seemed important to the children. The older children, for example, tried to check erosion in our yard, while the younger children found out how to plant tulip bulbs."

"But how do you know they learned anything?" asked Annabelle. "How do you know that the children are better able to solve other problems than they were last year?"

"We can't be sure," said Mrs. Roberts, "but I think I see a few signs. For example, the older children are less likely to let each other get by if they can't back up their opinions with facts."

"That reminds me of the time," said Catherine, "when one of my boys burst into the room and exclaimed, 'County agents are a waste of the taxpayer's money. All they do is ride around in fine automobiles.' This was the beginning of a study of the work of the county agent in our county. I am not sure that Bob was ever able to look at the facts in this case without bias, but as time went on, he became more careful about making statements he couldn't support."

"I would like to know," asked Sara Jackson, "how you can tell when children are developing healthy personalities? That's one of the aims on Sue's chart."

"That's a hard one, I'll admit, but I try to do it this way. I observe each child's behavior as carefully as I can. I look for evidence of poise, self-confidence, control of temper, group belongingness, self-respect, feeling of adequacy, and physical well-being. If a child is not gaining in these qualities, it may be that he is not learning very well how to deal with his emotional problems."

And so the look for results continued. Four meetings were held before the end of the year to compare and exchange ideas about evaluation. The teachers in this group talked about ways to observe growth in the use of reading, writing, spelling, and arithmetic, in use of problem-solving techniques, in learning to think, in meeting emotional needs, in democratic practices,[1] and in healthy personal and social development. Also included in their study were methods of observing the children's growth in working together cooperatively, in responsible citizenship, in use of creative abilities, in concern for the welfare of others, in understanding of the world in which we live, and in using the resources around us for better living.

Toward the close of the year, this group of teachers agreed that some growth could be assumed if only the school program was centered on certain principles agreed upon as sound. Growth and development of children toward responsible citizenship in a democratic society will probably take place, they said, if:

1. The children have opportunities all day to work on problems that are of concern to them in improving the quality of living.
2. The pupils are really thinking as they work on their problems.
3. All do joint planning for their work and play activities, appraise their results together, and look toward improvement of future activities.
4. Every pupil has many opportunities to use his abilities in creative ways.
5. Each child's work is selected and planned with guidance needed to insure success.
6. The teacher is friendly and helps to provide an atmosphere in which children feel emotionally safe.

"That last one's especially important," said Joan. "We need to help each child feel that someone cares about him, that he doesn't suffer from anxiety, that he has a feeling of belonging with at least some of his playmates, that he is free from severe feelings of guilt, that he feels reasonably secure economically and sure that he can achieve in some things that are important to him and others, and that he is beginning to set up purposes to guide his living. These are emotional needs we can't afford to neglect."

"What are you reading, Joan?" asked Catherine, noticing that Joan was referring to her notebook.

"These are thoughts I wrote down in my own words," said Joan, "but they are based on ideas that I learned from *The Wishing Well*."[2]

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[1] *School Practices Questionnaire*. New York, Laidlaw Bros., 1937.

[2] *The Wishing Well*. Columbus, Ohio, Ohio State University School, 1945.

"What's that?" Catherine wanted to know.

"It's a test I gave to my children twice this year to find out whether I was helping the children meet emotional needs. It has 160 wishes in it, like 'I wish I belonged to a club.' Each child is asked to check the wishes that concern him most. I found that there is less anxiety about achievement as compared with last year. Children are more free from feelings of guilt. They are not as afraid of failure. More of them feel they 'belong.' I believe that's partly because I tried to help them with problems revealed by the test."

Joan continued, "It looks now as if our school is doing a better job of helping children meet emotional needs than it did last year. At the same time the children also show more growth in work-study skills and reading, if we can judge by the results of the Iowa Every Pupil Test of Basic Skills." [3]

"If we have finished talking about meeting emotional needs, I want to hear a little more about the skills—like reading," said Catherine. "How do you tell whether or not children are improving in reading? Of course I know about standard tests,[4] and we use them, but I mean other ways."

"I think we can tell something by the amount of reading children do on their own," answered Annabelle. "I have two or three children who still read only what I ask them to read, but others have doubled the number of books they have read on their own since last year. They also look in many books, not just one, when they want facts."

"The children in my school are using what they read in many ways this year," said Sue, "even though there is still much room for improvement. I feel rather good about that. Sometimes a child picks up a magazine or a bulletin which has something in it he wants to tell about at home—like changing land from cotton to clover for grazing."

"Or to tell their parents the gist of a news item, like an item about the people of Korea." added Joan.

"Results and purposes are really all mingled together, aren't they?" said Annabelle. "I never saw such an improvement of writing and spelling as when my children recently wrote a letter of thanks for a new book that the children from Ivey Corner School sent us. Their first attempts at letter writing earlier in the year were quite feeble."

"You folks are helping me learn to look for results in ways I hadn't thought about," said Catherine at the last meeting of the year.

"Me, too," said Annabelle. "It's been good to think things through together. What has impressed me most has been the importance of looking for changes in the lives of the boys and girls."

"I've been looking for changes, too," said Sue. "I've been looking for evidences that children are thinking better, that they jump to conclusions less often, that they use information to solve real problems."

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[3] *Iowa Every Pupil Test of Basic Skills.* New York, Houghton Mifflin Co., 1943.

[4] See also *Guidance in Rural Schools* and *Teaching in Small Schools*, Op. cit. footnote, p. 16.

Joan added, "I've noticed that Bill and Millie and Dick are quicker to take responsibility than they were at the beginning of the year."

"And I've observed that the children work together more effectively," said Mrs. Roberts.

"I've noticed," said Catherine, "that as my children have made progress in the ways you've all mentioned, they've improved their ability in reading, writing, and arithmetic. They can use these skills better in solving their problems out of school and in than they could the first of the year."

"It seems to have been a year of looking for changes in the children. I'm sure our meetings have helped us all," was Sue's conclusion as the group adjourned.

The year's efforts to look for evidences of growth or change in the pupils kept Sue, Catherine, Joan, Annabelle, Sarah, and Mrs. Roberts alert to the children's progress and increased their ability to judge the results of their teaching.

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